

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Cathy Wolfe
District One

Diane Oberquell
District Two

Robert N. Macleod
District Three

NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL

March 23, 2006

Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board
Noxious Weed Committee Members
P.O. Box 42560
Olympia, WA 98504-2560

Dear Committee Members,

This letter is written to request that the species Common Fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare* var. *vulgare*) be added to the Washington State Noxious Weed List for 2007, with the exemption of *F. vulgare* var. *azoricum*, as a Class C Noxious Weed.

Please refer to the enclosed copy of the Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board Written Findings for Common Fennel for information about the biology and history of the species.

Information about control options and history can be found in the Weed Workers' Handbook published by the Watershed Project and California Invasive Plant Council as well as The Nature Conservancy Element Stewardship Abstract for *Foeniculum vulgare*, copies enclosed.

Also in reference to the Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board Written Findings for Common Fennel, an excerpt from the Rationale for Listing states that: "Listing *Foeniculum vulgare* as a Class C Noxious Weed would allow individual counties to locally control the weed where it is deemed necessary and feasible."

Several Common Fennel sites have been found and documented in Thurston County. Please find enclosed a report of these locations.

In Washington State, escaped populations of *F. vulgare* have been reported in: Orcas and San Juan Islands in San Juan County; Anacortes and Mount Vernon in Skagit County; King County and Port Townsend in Jefferson County. Escaped plants have also been reported in the Gulf Islands of British Columbia, Canada north of the San Juan Islands.

Extensive infestations in California have been reported by Sarah Reichard; Associate Professor, Forest Resources; Center for Urban Horticulture, University of Washington and in Oregon by Catherine Hovanic, of the Washington Native Plant Society.

There has been a good deal of feedback from several counties and organizations stating their concern about Common Fennel, and the species is listed by the Washington Invasive Species Coalition and many other organizations as a plant invasive to Western Washington.

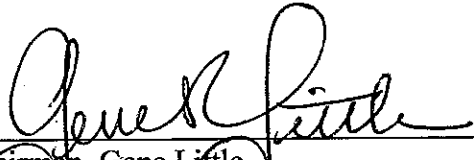
- The Nature Conservancy ESA for *Foeniculum vulgare* states that "Where established, *Foeniculum vulgare* is persistent and difficult to eradicate", along with information that suggests that the species is well adapted and tolerant of a wide range of environmental factors throughout temperate areas of the world.
- A report on the Invasive/Exotic Vegetation Management Program by the University of California at Berkeley lists Common Fennel as a "Priority 1 Species of Special Concern". The California Exotic Pest Plant Council also describes Common Fennel as invasive.
- The March 2001 Nursery News publication by the Oregon Department of Agriculture, Invasive Species Issues section articles a *Statement of Policy on Biological Invasive Concerns* by Dan Hinckley, Heronswood Nursery, Ltd., Kingston, WA, in which *Foeniculum vulgare* is the first on a list of plants that the nursery has removed from its inventory because of the plant's invasive nature.

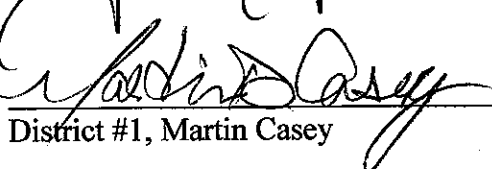
When compared to other species on the Thurston County Noxious Weed List using a risk assessment criteria chart, Common Fennel ranks higher than nearly half of the species already listed for control.

We would greatly appreciate the committee members taking the necessary steps to allow us and those counties who wish to, the opportunity to protect their natural resources and native bio-diversity from the destructive impacts of this species while we have the opportunity to do so.

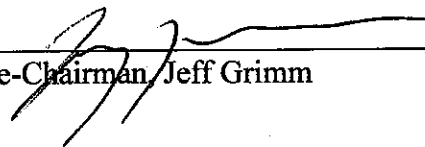
Sincerely,

Members of the Thurston County Noxious Weed Control Board,


Chairman, Gene Little


District #1, Martin Casey

District #5, Patricia McCann


Vice-Chairman, Jeff Grimm

District #4, Dorothy Saunders


Cooperative Extension, Don Tapio

Enclosures (4)